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NEWS
Letter

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Summer 1959

No. 3

JACK LONDON IN THE SOVIET UNION

By Vil Bykov

JOURNAL OF A JOURNEYING PRINTER

By Adrian Wilson

SERENDIPITY

NOTES ON PUBLICATIONS :: EXHIBITIONS

ELECTED TO MEMBERSHIP

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The Book Club of California

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The Club is limited to eight hundred members. When vacancies exist membership is open to all who are in sympathy with its aims and whose applications are approved by the Board of Directors. Regular Membership involves no responsibilities beyond payment of the annual dues of \$15.00.* Dues date from the month of the member's election.

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The President's Page

IT IS with no small realisation of the great honor accorded me that I greet you as tenth president of the Club. I can only hope that I shall be able to pilot the Club as wisely and steadfastly as my predecessors have done in the past.

Under the able leadership of the retiring president, James D. Hart, the Club enjoyed one of its most successful periods. As most of you know, the demand for membership was unprecedented, and when the waiting list reached 50 it was decided to raise the enrollment from 750 to 800. But this expediency only took care of those already waiting; since then additional requests to join the Club have been coming in at an ever-increasing rate.

The chairmanships of the various committees for the ensuing year have all been filled and I would like to take this opportunity to thank those members who cheerfully accepted the responsibilities involved. Their names and those of their associates will be found appended to the notice of the General Meeting. Also elsewhere in this number of the *News-Letter* will be found a notice

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of our latest publication, *Typographical Design in Relation to Photographic Composition*. The Fall book will be, I think, of great interest to members: an unpublished manuscript of that most beloved of American authors, Mark Twain. It will be of special interest to aelurophiles. It is too early to mention the Christmas publication, but plans are going forward to issue what will be one of the most handsome and important volumes ever to bear the Club's imprint.

It remains for me, as your new president, to ask your good will for the coming year and beg of you to extend to me the cooperation you have always so generously given to my predecessors.

DAVID MAGEE

Jack London in the Soviet Union

by Vil Bykov *

JACK LONDON'S fiction is more popular in the U.S.S.R. than that of any other foreign author. Almost 17,000,000 copies of his books have been sold in the Soviet Union, but his popularity is not new. London's writings were liked in Russia long before the Great October Revolution. Translations of his stories and novels appeared in Russia soon after they were first issued in the author's homeland and Europe. By 1910 several volumes of his works had been printed in Russia, and in 1911 publication of a complete edition of his works was started. Although this edition did not, as promised, include all of his writings, it was issued in a fine style and since it soon sold out it helped to fix Jack London's reputation as an established author.

After the Revolution many separate books by London were printed while at the same time multi-volumed collections of his works were also published. Of these the most notable is the *Com-*

*Mr. Bykov, who is an Aspirant (doctoral candidate) in the Philological Faculty of Moscow State University, is an exchange student at the University of California, Berkeley, 1958-59, working with Prof. James D. Hart on a dissertation on Jack London's fiction.

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plete Collected Works issued in 1928-1929 by the publishing house, Z.I.F., in twenty-four volumes, prefaced by a partial translation of Charmian London's *The Book of Jack London*. This collection includes all of London's fiction with the exception of a few obscure stories, plays and poems.

Soviet publishers annually reissue separate works by London, but they also print collections, like the eight-volume set of novels, stories and articles published three years ago. This set included several new translations, and, if memory does not fail me, it was printed in an edition of 600,000 copies. These were all subscribed for during five hours of one day, good evidence of the undying fame of Jack London in the U.S.S.R., particularly since even these great sales have not caused a decline in the circulation of his books from libraries.

One cannot say that the creative genius of Jack London has been completely studied and analyzed in the U.S.S.R. Only one dissertation has been written about him. It analyzes the life and creative genius of the writer and concentrates chiefly on his novels, *The Iron Heel* and *Martin Eden*. A work has also been written concerning the "Alaskan Cycle" of his short stories, and several articles have been printed in learned journals. However, there is not yet a general book about the creative development of the writer.

In 1956 literally all parts of the U.S.S.R. celebrated the 80th anniversary of the birth of Jack London and the 40th anniversary of his death. Articles concerning his life and his literary genius appeared in newspapers and magazines of the several Republics, even in the most extreme corners of the Union—in Siberia, in the European part of the Russian Federation, in Kazakhstan and in the Ukraine.

There are those who explain the popularity of the famous son of California in the Soviet Union by his adherence to the Socialist Party and by his socialist ideas, as though these ideas saturated the works of the writer. But this point of view seems rather shallow. Whoever is well acquainted with the creative genius of Jack London knows that in only one or two novels, out of a total number of nineteen, and only in five to seven short stories out of 153 to 160, does he develop his socialistic ideas. In the remaining artistic works he deals with quite different material.

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Of course, the popularity of such a novel as *The Iron Heel*, for example, may be explained in terms of ideological orientation. The novel actually attracts the Soviet reader with ideas of social reform and by its anti-fascist and anti-militaristic themes. The popularity of many of London's articles may also be explained in these terms. But what may be said about *The Iron Heel* and the articles cannot be said of *Martin Eden* or the "Alaskan stories," which happen to be the most famous works of London in the U.S.S.R. Great popularity is also enjoyed by *The Sea Wolf*, *White Fang*, *The Call of the Wild* and many of his *Tales of the South Seas*. In all these works there is nothing even close to the ideas of socialism.

How did the American writer capture the interest and affection of the people? Lack of "happy endings" in many of his works, as in "White Silence," "Finis" and *Martin Eden*, did not prevent these books from capturing the attention and sympathy of the reader. It is common knowledge that the heroes of these works met untimely ends; perhaps the death of a character does not diminish but rather enhances the literary merit of his masterpieces.

Jack London's charm does not consist in the immutable nobility of the central character. The main hero of the story "Finis" is a thief and murderer; Wolf Larsen in *The Sea Wolf* is a brute in human form.

It is the atmosphere of heroism and struggle which Jack London creates in his novels and stories that captivates the reader. The tense struggles against the wild forces of nature and society which his heroes carry on elicits that peculiar color which stimulates the imagination of the reader. They become embroiled in critical situations, they struggle between life and death, strain every nerve to gain a victory. London's hero gives his all to a struggle, usually shows unremitting courage, a readiness to risk all, to fight and to die for the sake of achieving his goal. These qualities inspire the admiration of the reader.

London's characters enter into struggle for various reasons: for the sake of money ("Finis"), for the happiness of others (*The Iron Heel*), for a revolution ("The Mexican"), as well as for the sake of a career (*Martin Eden*) or just for survival in the often futile collisions with nature ("Love of Life"). Everywhere their

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actions and emotions reflect the characters' compulsions toward life and reveal the essence of their capacities. The most contradictory and the most striking human qualities attract the attention of the reader and it is these qualities which, I think, create the incomparable atmosphere of heroism and inspired struggle which mark his literary works. His books have the refreshing quality reminiscent of a glass of fine wine. It is not uncommon that even when a character perishes he does so after numerous triumphs or after winning a sweeping victory. This latter instance is well illustrated in *Martin Eden*. A worker from Tula once wrote to me, "*Martin Eden* helped me to believe in my own strength. I love the hero for his persistence." It seems that this statement catches the active spirit of London's creative genius.

Russia in the last fifty-five years has undergone three revolutions. In this short time the people have turned their fatherland from a country of paupers and illiterates into a power with advanced science and technology. This required gigantic efforts and the people's belief in their own strength. The people had both, therefore, the activity and life-sustaining spirit of the books of the eminent son of California, which are close to them. The process of building, the attacks on nature, the struggles for a better present are continuing and expanding, thus the stature of Jack London does not diminish. I risk the accusation of propagandizing, but these are historical facts which cannot be avoided and without which it is impossible to understand the reasons for the wide reputation of Jack London in Russia.

Jack London's deep belief in man's abilities in the face of overwhelming odds lends an optimistic tone, a life-asserting force to his writings. A. M. Gorky valued Jack London highly, and Leonid Andreev was enraptured by his books. Although these two Russian writers had their differences, both liked the brisk spirit of optimism and the crystal clearness of London's stories. I feel that there is in this American writer a sort of spiritual community with the Russian classical tradition and that there is some manner of kinship with Russian literature, with its pursuit of the "noble" man which we call "*krasiviy chelovek*," and its ideals of good. Leo Tolstoy was concerned with this in his pursuit of human rebirth and Anton Chekov said that all within a man must be beautiful—his soul, his appearance and his

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behavior. Similar principles in the pursuit of the "noble" man, that is the man of noble spirit, helped London to find his way to the heart of the Soviet reader.

The more one considers the reasons for London's popularity in the U.S.S.R., the clearer it becomes that this is the reason. Just for this same cause, of the two great Russian writers, Tolstoy is more beloved in the U.S.S.R. than Dostoevsky. Tolstoy believed in the inherent goodness of man, whereas the psychologically ill Dostoevsky was a pessimist who did not believe in the beauty of the human spirit.

Healthy people better understand a healthy person. They believe in man and they tend toward that which is full of life. Jack London brought to the Russian reader a world full of romanticism and vigor, and the reader came to love him.

In certain books by London the reader is enveloped by the unusual and romantic atmosphere of unknown lands, by feats of valor and courage. In others he finds the bare truths of life; he hears the wrathful voice of the writer. In some of his best books London achieves masterful analyses of human emotions. He is versatile and varied, he appeals to both the youngster and the adult.

During his time the articles and essays by London played a significant part in the creation of public opinion in California and even extended to other parts of the country. A thorough study of the social movement of the United States during the turn of the century is incomplete without an acquaintance with his impact and influence as a public figure.

The Soviet reader feels that Jack London helps him to understand the national traits of the American people, their energy, persistence, and will to emerge as the victor from their stern encounters with the forces of nature and society. It may be that this activity and persistence, this desire to be masters of their own fate, are common characteristics native to the two peoples—the Americans and the Russians. Possibly somewhere here lie the points of contact, of that community which exists between our two peoples, despite all attempts to dispel it.

London realistically portrayed the California of the end of the last and the beginning of the present century.¹ He aimed at truthfully showing the complexity of this society, showing also

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its environmental reality, although in his view there was much that was confused and inconsistent in the society. It is difficult not to concur in the assertions of the authors of *The Literary History of the United States* that "he achieved originality and significance by enthusiastic acceptance of the new doctrines of society and science."² But though one agrees with this view, one must still keep in mind that Jack London was well endowed with literary talent. Although he abused and wasted it at times, his literary talent was shown vividly and powerfully in the best of his works. Mastery of the intricacies of plot construction; skill in concentrating or dispersing tension in the appropriate place; filigree accuracy in description of details, calling forth a vivid picture of a moment of life; capability to depict the character in action; picturesqueness of his language, which, perhaps, is not always absolutely accurate, but is always sufficient to express the author's thought and to paint the necessary picture; the ability to captivate the reader so that he forgets time as he follows the writer's imagination from the first sentence to the last—these are only a few of the elements of Jack London's talent.

All these merits of Jack London the writer cannot be passed over in a consideration of his works. His literary technique in itself attracts the attention of the investigator and requires serious analysis. Jack London's literary achievements represent one of the interesting pages in the history of American literature. The significance of Jack London exceeded the limits of the national boundaries. A short-story writer, novelist, traveler and active public figure, the great son of California emerges. His essential contributions were made in all these fields.

As a master of the short story Jack London makes a substantial contribution to the development of American literature. His literary creations were sufficiently well developed to place him along with such writers as Washington Irving, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Edgar Allan Poe, Bret Harte, Ambrose Bierce, Mark Twain, and O. Henry. The opinion of readers and critics vary—one favors O. Henry, another Bierce. You do not find similarities in the aforementioned list. Each brought something of his own into the history of American culture, suddenly portrayed reality from a new side and understood his tasks as a writer in his own way. London himself did the same. Jack London is unlike any

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one of these other writers, but like them he enriched American art, conquered world opinion, and merits the recognition of his homeland.

¹ This is well shown in the first chapters of Sam S. Baskett's dissertation, *Jack London's Fiction*, Berkeley, 1951.

² *The Literary History of the United States*, New York, 1957, p. 1034.

Journal of a Journeying Printer

by Adrian Wilson

[*Part Two*]

Offenbach: The Klingspor Type Foundry has sunk to making refrigerators, but the illustrious name is perpetuated in the Klingspor Museum, housed in a stately mansion. Here, on permanent exhibition are the work of Rudolf Koch and his disciples, particularly a calligrapher, the late Rudo Spemann, whom Zapf considers Germany's greatest master. Among the contemporary exhibits was an even more impressive display of the work of von Sichowsky, Londenberg, and their students than I saw in Hamburg, and a stunning show of German jacket design. During the days of its glory, the Klingspor Foundry issued exquisite calendars and type specimen booklets, printed at the house press by Max Dorn and illustrated by Willi Harwerth. At the suggestion of Warren Chappell, who spent several pre-Hitler years at Koch's workshop, I paid visits to both these men, now late in their careers, collaborating occasionally, and turning out fine work.

Mainz: This autumnal afternoon we drove with Hermann, through the vineyards which supply Rhine wine to her Majesty the Queen of England, to the Gutenberg Museum at Mainz. Now located in the city library, the collection is miraculously intact despite the destruction of its pre-war building. Dr. Helmut Presser showed us the methodically complete display of the development of the book from the very Gutenberg Bible on. In the reconstruction of Gutenberg's workshop was an old pensioner pulling impressions on a groaning screw-press, at least one board

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of which is guaranteed to have been in the press of The Master. Did I detect modern quoins, new sheet guides, and a rubber roller instead of ink balls? We dutifully paid one mark for our souvenir, a reproduction of a page from the forty-two-line Bible, and watched the ancient cast a type letter in a hand mold.

Lugano, Switzerland: Imre Reiner's villa perches far above the Lake of Lugano near the Swiss-Italian border. Our appointment was for eleven o'clock but at that time we were still wandering over the mountainside getting tri-lingual directions. Our rapture at the blue water and the snow caps alternated with acute frustration. We finally came upon a man in the road wearing a green eyeshade. It was Reiner. I was excited, for his daring typography and engraving have always intrigued me. We followed him up through his garden to the studio. There was a table buried in etchings, all abstract and characterised by that freedom and vigor I associate with Reiner's types. Here in Switzerland, where he settled because of his precarious health, he has, in recent years, become independent of the whims of clients for he has sold enough paintings and etchings to enable him to work as an artist rather than a designer. However, he still continues type-designing, three scripts having appeared since the war. Occasionally he does an Insel-Verlag catalog cover or a piece for the magazines *Du* or *Gebrauchsgraphik*, but they are primarily art work with typography subordinated. He showed us a series of etchings for a book of poems by Rilke titled *The Rose*, each a subtle interpretation of the flower, rich in textures and playful line. The edition is to be published by Loewy in Paris, printed in Zurich. Of the many splendid limited editions Reiner has designed and illustrated, one survived the war in only three copies, one of which fortunately was tucked away in the Library of Congress. Another, he designed and illustrated for Dr. Erwin Rosenthal of Zurich and Berkeley. In fact, Reiner had a copy of a book which I printed for Dr. Rosenthal in 1952, *Picasso, Painter and Engraver*. He searched out for me his other items of San Francisco printing, several John Henry Nash books, the gift of a California exile. Somehow, in that studio with its vast panorama of the lake, its stacks of vibrant prints and this amazing, indomitable man, they looked incongruous.

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Venice: In 1500 there were 141 printers working in Venice. To my knowledge I was the only one there on October 13th, 1958. And I was only visiting. The production of priceless incunabula has ceased but the remains are there in the Bibliotheque Marciana on the Piazza San Marco. I had cleverly written down two books frequently cited by Emile Mâle in *The Gothic Image* with which to convince the librarians of the depth and seriousness of my scholarship: the *Speculum Majus* of Vincent of Beauvais and the *Imago Mundi* of Honorius of Autun. I had to rely on my feeble German with the librarian. It was fortunate that it was feeble because it disguised under the cloak of linguistic difficulty, my entire ignorance of the subjects. He gave me access to the card catalogue, handwritten in a script at least 100 years old. The two treasures were not there! Undaunted, the librarian brought me the special catalogue, huge leather-bound volumes, inscribed at least 400 years ago, and therein I found my ancients, Vincent in a four-volume edition of 1624 and Honorius in a thirteenth-century manuscript. My man was so impressed that within minutes he personally delivered the priceless volumes to my table and hovered about waiting for fresh orders. Rising to the challenge I sent him trotting for a tenth-century Bestiary which I had secretly picked out of an exhibition catalog on his desk. Meanwhile I discovered that Honorius and Vincent both wrote in Latin, a language with which I have not kept in close contact, and that their books were, alas, not illuminated. By this time my man was back with the Bestiary, undecipherable also, but beautifully illuminated.

Determined to confuse the good librarian further I asked if he knew the first use of italic capitals in the work of Aldus Manutius (1450–1515). Since Aldus was a Venetian, perhaps he could find me a few of the volumes. The librarian explained that they have everything Aldus ever printed, and called a guard to escort me to the room where, behind shutters untouched for decades, were the sacred products. He left me there, submerged way beyond my depth, surrounded by the lifelines to progress as a scholar-printer. I thought of Joyce and Melissa idly feeding corn to the pigeons on the Piazza outside, and I maneuvered a graceful escape.

Rome: Encouraged by my success at Venice, I decided to baffle a

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librarian or two in Rome while I dipped into the history of theater printing. The Museo Burcardo is housed in a decaying palazzo. The halls as I entered were thick with the embalmed trappings of dead performances, lace shawls, masks, dusty miniature stages. The charming young man who is librarian knew just enough English to tell me that there were no playbills here of any typographical interest; but he had theater prints which I could see. Among these I found marvelous playbills, "avvisos" and "manifesti" dating back to 1715. There was even one in which the printer had built a complete Roman temple out of rules and ornaments. As my excitement mounted I realized that a fascinating study could be made of the typography of playbills. The librarian, responding gradually to my pressure, revealed a room below, now a shambles of neglected theatrical memorabilia. The floor was heaped with books and papers, but in display cases around three walls was a dazzling, forgotten collection of Italian playbills extending back to a testimonial to Scaramuzza in 1692. As the first step to my "definitive work" I realized I must have some of these photographed. It took all the next day to verify that Italy is not America and that one does not do these things so simply. Someday I'm going back there with my own Brownie!

Editor's Note: From Rome we drove up the coast, along the Cote d'Azur and into the Provençal. I found the author increasingly adrift from typography, lyrical about scenery, cathedrals, villages, caves and food. He went through the Auvergne without even investigating the paper mill of Richard de Bas. We almost lost him in the caves of Lascaux and under some piles of tapestries in the Lurçat workshops. We came upon Paris with only one rainy day to spare, fell in love with it at sight, and made a rendezvous for spring. All this enchanted, autumnal time the author was lost to his Calling. Eventually we arrived in Belgium, and in Antwerp at the Plantin Museum, he awoke.

Antwerp, Belgium: Suppose a poor ex-bookbinder goes to a big city and sets up a printshop. After forty years of incredible industry he finally sees the walls of his handsome establishment hung with Lurçat tapestries interspaced with original Picasso portraits of his family, and his bookshelves richly laden with incunabula and the work of his own hand. Suppose he could insure the mounting glory of his great firm by siring directors unto the eighth generation. And suppose he could then have foreseen a nincompoop named Hyacinth give up and sell the whole vital

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works to the city as a Museum. Would the founder ever have begun it all?

The ruminations occupied me as we wandered through the burnished rooms of the Plantin-Moretus Museum. We rubbed the embossed leather walls, fingered the tapestries and analyzed the illuminated initials in the rare manuscripts. I am not sure the ancestors in the Rubens portraits appreciated our presumption.

Christopher Plantin is the only bookbinder I know of who received a sword-wound in the line of duty. According to the guide book of the Museum, Plantin wanted personally to deliver a job to Philip II of Spain. "He unfortunately ran into some drunkards who mistook the man with the case under the arm for a guitar player who had insulted them; they transfixed his shoulder with a sword." The guide book does not tell us if the precious binding ever reached Plantin's client. In any case, we are told, this injury forced Plantin into printing.

He set up shop in Antwerp in 1549 in a combined home and workshop. Eventually Garamond and Granjon were cutting the types, Rubens was engraving title pages and illustrations, and Louis Elzevier, the first of his dynasty, was running errands. By 1572 Plantin had completed a Polyglot Bible in five languages for his old patron Philip II. When the ungrateful Spanish sacked Antwerp in 1576 and Plantin's business suffered he used the lull to set up a branch at the University of Leiden. At the same time Plantin guaranteed there would be heirs who were printers by displaying his daughters in the pressroom. One stalwart ink-ball wielder, Jan Moretus, perpetuated his name right through to 1875.

Leiden, The Netherlands: By the time I returned to Holland I had learned of Jan van Krimpen's death. Van Krimpen had been much in our thoughts on our journey because several of our richest finds had been his suggestions. The enchanting day we saw the mosaics at Torcello near Venice which led us into an extended mosaic quest; the Toulouse-Lautrec Museum at Albi and the great fortress-cathedral next door; the Goya Museum at Castres; all of these we would have missed had it not been for van Krimpen's enthusiastic recommendations. We had wanted to thank him, but we were too late.

We made another trip to Haarlem before leaving the continent

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to see if Enschedé had survived. We were hosted again by the extraordinary Sem Hartz, now General Art Director of Enschedé. His new types, Emergo and Juliana continue the elegance of style van Krimpen established there. The most delightfully distractable of men, an afternoon may find him experimenting at home in his private press, shooting with the Grand Duke of Luxembourg, or hunting down Delft tiles in the antique shops. Our lunch with him in the Enschedé dining room was also attended by a legion of visiting Master Printers of Belgium, but Sem did not allow the toasts and speeches to distract him from practising his English with us. I have his solemn promise that when I come back to Holland in the spring I can examine his small press in the cellar of his home, which is, after all, the only proper place for a press.

Editor's Note: The gentle impact of the contact between the author and the world of English printing is still reverberating and will continue to do so for the next few months. Journals covering the English printing scene will appear in a future issue. J.L.W.

Exhibition Notes

THIS YEAR, The Academy of American Poets selected Robinson Jeffers for their award, and with them, The Book Club honors this great California poet.

On Monday evening, May 25, the Club opened with a notable collection of books, manuscripts and memorabilia assembled for the occasion by former Club Director T. M. Lilienthal. This ardent admirer of Jeffers and a printer-publisher of many of the smaller pieces in this show, has put together a remarkable collection spanning fifty-five years of the poet's writings including all of the trade and limited editions (some 60 items), plus four manuscripts loaned for this exhibition by the author: *Solstice*, *October Week-end*, *De Rerum Virtute* and *All the Corn in One Barn*.

The niche in the Club rooms was reserved for *Medea*. In it, we used a large German poster for the first showing of *Medea* in Germany and surrounding it, programs and photographs of the play from various countries throughout the world.

This has been the Club's most ambitious show to date and one of which your Committee is justly proud. We have hopes that this is not the last of member-participation. These shows have been a regular feature of the Club for over nine years and almost all of them have been arranged and "created" with very little help from the members. Your Committee would appreciate any and all ideas for continued exhibitions.

From April 6 to May 22, the Club had the pleasure of exhibiting a complete collection of William Pickering's *Diamond Classics* borrowed for the showing

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from the outstanding collection of Miss Elizabeth N. Bell of San Francisco. We believe this exhibit to be first public showing on the Pacific Coast of these miniature books.

Too often these tiny books have been dismissed by the serious collector as "novelties" or "freaks." That they were intended by the publisher himself as a novelty, not as a serious publishing effort, has clouded the importance of these books for the typographic collector. In 1820, Pickering announced these books to an interested public as an introduction to his new bookshop. The immediate success of this venture was out of all proportion to their practical value. They were imitated and copied throughout England and the Continent. A vogue for the "Bijou" book came into being. And, instead of becoming a great bookseller, Pickering became a publisher, probably the most outstanding in his time. Today, these *Diamond Classics* have been credited with the introduction of the first use of cloth for book-binding and if for no other reason, they now enjoy an honored place in the bibliography of book-making. To augment this collection, the Club borrowed from Lawton Kennedy probably the largest book that Pickering ever published—certainly, the most elaborate one. *Illuminated Ornaments Selected from MSS and Early Books from the Sixth to the Seventeenth Centuries*, drawn and engraved (and colored by hand, in part) by Henry Shaw and published in 1833, is a most unusual and exciting book. And from Robert Grabhorn's collection, the Club was fortunate in being able to show original drawings for many of the engraved frontispieces that were used in the *Diamond Classics*, the evolution of the Dolphin and Anchor mark of Pickering and original woodengraved "pulls" taken from an artist-engraver's scrapbook—an unknown artist who obviously worked for Pickering and his printers.

Notes on Publications

MR. STANLEY MORISON, dean of English typographers, has graced the title page of a Book Club publication for the first time in our Spring book—*Typographical Design in Relation to Photographic Composition*. We are glad to say the book, beautifully printed in New Times Roman by The Black Vine Press, has met with approval from most of the membership. Those who are interested solely in books of Californian and Western history naturally regard the subject matter with little favor, but we must remember that the Club has to try to cater to a variety of membership interests, and it is impossible to please *all* the members *all* the time.

We are happy to report that *Typographical Design* is selling well. If you have not yet placed your order may we suggest you do so to avoid disappointment. Two-thirds of the edition has been subscribed for at this writing; by the time you get this number of the *News-Letter* the balance may well be spoken for.

The September publication is to be *Concerning Cats: Two Tales by Mark Twain*, edited, with an introduction, by Frederick Anderson. This volume, composed of two previously unpublished sketches written by Mark Twain in the 1880's, will be printed by Jane Grabhorn's Colt Press. The cat tales present an intimate and amusing view of the humorist and his young family during the years in

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which he wrote most of his greatest books. Mark Twain, whose devotion to cats endured throughout his life, has illustrated one of the pieces with his own vigorous drawings.

Mr. Anderson is the librarian in charge of the Mark Twain Papers at the University of California in Berkeley. He collaborated with Henry Nash Smith in editing a previous publication of The Book Club, *Mark Twain: San Francisco Correspondent*.

Elected to Membership

The following have been elected to membership since the Spring issue of the News-Letter:

<i>Member</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Sponsor</i>
Thomas J. Albert	Laguna Beach	Marjorie Freeman
Albert Cohen	Youngstown, Ohio	David Magee
Lewis Hale	Ross	Joseph C. Nagy
Edgar B. Jessup	Piedmont	Warren R. Howell
Paul M. Kahn	Fairfax	David Magee
Lewis D. Osborne	Menlo Park	Michael Harrison
Carlos P. Ryan	San Francisco	David Magee
Donald Turner	San Francisco	Oscar Lewis
Rollin M. Warner, Jr.	San Francisco	Warren R. Howell

Annual Meeting

THE ANNUAL MEETING of The Book Club of California was held Tuesday noon, March 10, 1959, in the Club Rooms. Dr. Glenn S. Dumke, president of San Francisco State College, was elected to the Board in place of Mr. Kenneth K. Bechtel who did not wish to stand for re-election. Dr. Arthur L. Bloomfield, Dr. John A. Hussey, Mr. Martin S. Mitau, and Dr. Albert Shumate were re-elected Directors for three-year terms.

After the Annual Meeting was adjourned, the Board of Directors met for election of officers. Unanimously elected were: David Magee, president; Oscar Lewis, vice-president; Joseph Bransten, treasurer; and Mrs. Elizabeth Downs, secretary.

Subsequently President Magee appointed the following committees to serve for the current year:

Publications: James D. Hart, *Chairman*; Arthur L. Bloomfield, Miss Edith M. Coulter, George P. Hammond, John A. Hussey, Oscar Lewis, W. W. Robinson.

Keepsakes: Albert Shumate, *Chairman*; Donald C. Biggs, Henry H. Clifford, Glenn S. Dumke, Warren Howell, Edgar B. Jessup, M. C. Nathan.

Exhibits: Albert Sperisen, *Chairman*; William P. Barlow, Jr., Robert B. MacMakin.

Library: J. Terry Bender, *Chairman*; Mrs. Herbert Fahey, Mrs. R. F. Ferguson, George P. Hammond, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph J. Hansen, Jr.

Membership: Michael Harrison, *Chairman*; Mrs. Betty Ford-Aquino, Donald R. Fleming.

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House: Mrs. John I. Walter, *Chairman*; Mrs. Perry Biestman, Mrs. Robert Ludin.

Finance: Joseph Bransten, *Chairman*; George D. Gavin, Carroll T. Harris, T. M. Lilienthal, Martin S. Mitau, Albert Shumate, Mrs. John I. Walter.

Policy: James D. Hart, *Chairman*; George L. Harding, Mrs. John I. Walter, Carl I. Wheat.

News-Letter: (see inside front cover).

Serendipity

AMONG THE craftsmanship and design books being published this summer are *Papermaking as an Artistic Craft* by John Mason. Members will recall his fascinating article in the *News-Letter* (Winter, 1958). There is a foreword by Dard Hunter, and illustrations by Rigby Graham. Mr. Mason has been a professional hand-bookbinder and lecturer on book production. After the war, he found that none of the three handmade paper mills remaining in England could supply the small quantities of special paper which he required in the course of his work. Undaunted, he started with improvised equipment in his kitchen and later in a garden workshop. Now, his delightful sheets, some containing skeleton leaves, flowers, and colored threads, are in demand throughout the world. He has also started a mill at Leicester College of Art, and there made the first nylon paper in Europe. Probably the most important part of the book concerns Mr. Mason's detailed description of his methods so that anyone may easily follow the directions and, with little outlay and no experience, make his own paper. The price is \$3.75.

EARLY THIS YEAR, Norman H. Strouse spoke before The Book Club of Detroit on the provocative subject of "How to Build a Poor Man's Morgan Library." His paper was so original and well detailed that it is being published in book form by the Detroit Club. Mr. Strouse, for many years, has been a very interested and generous member of The Book Club of California, contributing many valuable books to our library. There will be a number of our members who will like to have his new book; a few copies will be available at about \$3.50 each. (The Book Club of Detroit, 5480 Cass Avenue, Detroit 2, Michigan).

THERE HAVE BEEN a number of books on the history of printing; probably too many. However, *Five Hundred Years of Printing* by S. H. Steinberg, boasts an unusual approach: the story of the relation between printing and civilization, the interdependence of printers, publishers and the public. Originally published in a Pelican edition, this book now appears with important new material and in a form which will give it a permanent place wherever there is an interest in the history of printing with its wider applications. Mr. Steinberg's subject is far more complex than the spread of the art of printing, its technical development, the changes in the appearance of the book, and the growth of the business of writing, making and selling books. All these subjects are indeed treated in

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detail, but against the wider background of the influence of printing—on ideas and on language and literacy. The price is \$6.00.

THE PEREGRINE PRESS OF HENRY EVANS was the title of a recent exhibit in the General Library of the University of California, Berkeley. The comprehensive exhibit celebrated "nine years of Evans family fun and work" by showing a variety of outstanding work. It included a series of twelve books and portfolios, *Pictures and Poems* (1954-1958), which presented original work by contemporary artists and writers; *The Hand Press* (1959), which, through ten block prints by Rick Barton, contains attractive representations of such Bay area hand presses as The Book Club's Columbian, the Grabhorns' C. Foster, the University's Albion and the Evans' own Hoe Washington; and *The Mycophagists' Book* (1951), written and illustrated by Evans' talented wife, Patricia. In addition to such work as this, The Peregrine Press publishes occasional broadsides (which have included a recipe for "Home Brew" prepared "as a tribute" to the delegates of the American Library Association's meeting in San Francisco in July, 1958) and the catalogues of The Porpoise Bookshop in San Francisco, which is also owned and operated by the Evans family.

The Peregrine Press was founded with the announcement that no reprints would be considered, and it has been primarily interested in original creative work. In addition, most of its productions have been sold to meet the cost of printing, and little more. According to its 1950 prospectus, "Special honors [have been] created for music, cookery and printing, as these most obviously are the three most important of the arts, closely related to the elevation of the soul."

THE CLUB's library has recently been presented with three handsome Westholm publications by their publisher, Herbert F. West, Club member in Hanover, New Hampshire. The books are: Kenneth Roberts' *Cowpens: The Great Morale-Builder*, printed in 400 copies by Edgecombe-Printer, Kalamazoo, Michigan (1957); *William Henry Hudson's Diary Concerning his Voyage from Buenos Aires to Southampton on the Ebro*, printed by The Stinehour Press, Lunenburg, Vermont (1958); and Mr. West's own *For a Hudson Biographer*, printed by the Prairie Press, Iowa City, Iowa (1958). According to Mr. West's foreword to *Cowpens*, this thirty-five-page work is the last piece of writing that Roberts finished before his death in 1957; at that time, he was at work on a historical novel containing a fictional description of the Battle of Cowpens. *Cowpens* was later published in a trade edition by Doubleday.

A RECENTLY PUBLISHED work of special interest to Club members is *Gold in Your Attic* by Van Allen Bradley, literary editor of the *Chicago Daily News*. This 277-page book about books is divided into three parts, in the first of which Mr. Bradley provides book hunters with a primer, a dictionary and a library list (which includes Professor James D. Hart's *The Popular Book*); in the second, he lists "forty-two fabulous American books" and ways in which to recognize them; and in the third, he gives a representative price index and guide to

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valuable books. Among the list of "fabulous" books that are most likely to turn up in Western attics are Norris' *McTeague* (1899), Harte's *The Luck of Roaring Camp* (1870), Mercer's *The Banditti of the Plains* (Cheyenne, 1894), Clarke's *Travels in Mexico and California* (1852), Ledyard's *A Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage* (1783), Leonard's *History of Oregon Territory* (1846), Wetherbee's *A Brief Sketch of Colorado Territory* (1863) and Slaughter's *The New Northwest* (1874). Mr. Bradley's book is published by the Fleet Publishing Company, New York, and sells for \$5.95.

WE HAVE at hand the second number of *Motif*, the new journal of the visual arts. Expertly edited by Ruari McLean, and published by the Shenval Press, 58 Frith Street, Soho, London W1, it will interest everyone concerned with the graphic arts. The current issue is particularly informative and handsome, with articles covering wood engraving, fine printing, historic photography, book illustration, calligraphy, book reviews, etc. This journal, attractively bound in boards in a large format, runs to about 100 pages, and is issued three times a year for \$9.00.

JUST PUBLISHED, and one of the most satisfactory books in its field, is *Modern Book Design* by Ruari McLean. Although slanted towards the general reader, it is also of value to the specialist since no other such comprehensive documentation of the period exists. In some detail and with many illustrations Mr. McLean describes the evolution of book design in Europe and America during the present century, after first outlining the condition of book production during the last quarter of the nineteenth century when mechanical composition and photographic methods of reproduction had become commercial realities. The work of a large number of important book designers since 1900 is described. The author, at the age of nineteen, began working for the Shakespeare Head Press in Oxford, and has continued as a typographical designer ever since. He is co-founder of a firm specializing in book design and production, is a typographical consultant to several organizations, and has contributed to many periodicals including our *News-Letter*. The book is priced at \$4.75.

FOLLOWING their success with *William Bulmer and the Shakespeare Press*, the Syracuse University Press recently published *Aldus Manutius and His Thesaurus Cornucopiae*, with a pleasant and scholarly introduction by Donald P. Bean, director of the Press. Before going to Syracuse, Mr. Bean was head of the Stanford University Press for many years. Both the Bulmer and Aldus are excellently designed and printed, and well illustrated; they will appeal to all interested in fine printing. The price is \$2.50.

THE PETER KAVANAGH HAND-PRESS, 238 East 29th Street, New York, announce *Recusant Books In America* by Lois Byrns. Limited to 100 copies, it includes a list of recusant publications which are available for research in American libraries. Of more general interest is the fact that this book was hand-set and hand-printed. The price is \$35.00. Also available from this press is *The First Dictionary of Irish Mythology* by Peter Kavanagh, the printer. There are 100

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copies priced at \$100.00 each. The price of hand-set and hand-printed books may be considered a bit high, until one reflects on the hours of painstaking hand labor. We feel that when a book is properly produced on the handpress, using dampened paper, it can be a production of great character and beauty, and an important contribution to present-day arts and crafts which are rather stifled by increasing automatism.

AN UNUSUAL but practical book in the field of bibliography is being planned for publication early in 1960: *Private Press Books* edited by Roderick Cave and Thomas Rae. Their prospectus tells us that "at the present time little is known of what is being produced by the printers for pleasure, the private presses. . . . In order to fill this gap, the Private Libraries Association—a non-profit society of booklovers and book-collectors, with members in over a dozen countries—has decided to sponsor an annual bibliography of private press books." This will be in three parts: an introductory essay discussing the work being done currently, and analysing trends in design and production; a list of the books issued during the past year, giving author, title, publisher, illustrator, type-face, etc.; a list of important articles about private presses during the previous year. In addition there will be an index to the authors and titles, which will be cumulated every five years. Limited to 750 copies, the price will be 90 cents; for those subscribing before September 30, the price is 60 cents. Those interested may write to Roderick Cave, Private Libraries Association, 5 Oakworth Court, Nelson Road, London N8, England.

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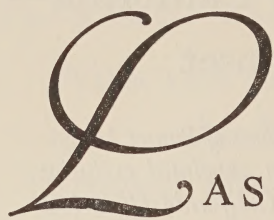
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LAST week I returned from a tour of Austria, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Spain, France, Belgium, Holland, and, of course, England. My purchases in both books and manuscripts are now coming into my shop daily. It would be a pleasure to show them to all interested.

WILLIAM P. WREDEN

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